

**Information Note**  
**Department of Health and Community Services**

**Title:** Emergency room visits by residents of the Botwood catchment area

**Issue:** To provide an update on the number of visits by residents in the Botwood catchment area to the emergency rooms in the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Centre in Botwood and the Central Newfoundland Regional Health Centre in Grand Falls-Windsor.

**Background and Current Status:**

- Prior to June 15, 2016, the Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Centre (DHTHC) in Botwood operated a 24 hour emergency room (ER) service. The DHTHC served a catchment area of 9,155 residents in 12 communities.
- During 2015, there were 10,051 visits to the Botwood ER, with 87 per cent of these occurring from 8 am to 8 pm. The 1,312 visits during 8 pm to 8 am averaged three or four visits each evening.
- It was acknowledged that this was an inefficient use of resources and Central Health (CH) proposed a reduction in service hours to address deficit pressures and to increase efficiency.
- On June 15, 2016 CH reduced the ER at DHTHC from a 24-hour service to an 8 am to 8 pm service with after-hours diversion of emergency clients to the ER at the Central Newfoundland Regional Health Centre (CNRHC) in Grand Falls-Windsor.
- The distance between Botwood and Grand Falls-Windsor is approximately 42 kilometers, or a 30 minute drive.
- ER registration data for the calendar year 2018 continues to support the 2016 decision to reduce the service hours at DHTHC.
- The following table summarizes the number of visits, at each ER, by community.

Table 1:

| ER Emergency Room Visits January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2018 |                  |                                       |                  |                 |   |  |                          |              |                            |
|---|------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|---|--|--------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Community   | 2016 Population* | Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Centre (DHTHC) |                  |                 | Central Newfoundland Regional Health Centre (CNRHC) |  |                          | Total Visits | % of total visits to DHTHC |
|   |                  | Travel Time to Botwood (Minutes)      | # Seen 8am - 8pm | % of Total Seen | Travel Time to GF-W (Minutes)                       | # Seen from Botwood Catchment 8pm to 8am | % from Botwood Catchment |              |                            |
| Botwood   | 2,875            | 0                                     | 4,508            | 57.9%           | 28  | 439                                      | 28.3%                    | 4,947        | 91.1%                      |
| Bishop's Falls  | 3,156            | 19                                    | 206              | 2.6%            | 11  | 786                                      | 52.5%                    | 992          | 20.8%                      |
| Cottrell's Cove   | 123              | 63                                    | 106              | 1.4%            | 85  | 13                                       | 0.9%                     | 119          | 89.1%                      |
| Fortune Harbour   | 78               | 71                                    | 83               | 1.1%            | 93  | 11                                       | 0.7%                     | 94           | 88.3%                      |
| Glover's Harbour  | 92               | 50                                    | 15               | 0.2%            | 72  | 3  | 0.2%                     | 18           | 83.3%                      |
| Leading Tickles   | 292              | 54                                    | 216              | 2.8%            | 75  | 22                                       | 1.5%                     | 238          | 90.8%                      |
| Northern Arm  | 426              | 9                                     | 352              | 4.5%            | 31  | 32                                       | 2.1%                     | 384          | 91.7%                      |
| Peterview   | 828              | 9                                     | 1,076            | 13.8%           | 27  | 96                                       | 6.4%                     | 1,172        | 91.8%                      |
| Phillips Head   | 151              | 18                                    | 152              | 2.0%            | 39  | 8  | 0.5%                     | 160          | 95.0%                      |
| Pleasantview  | 43               | 37                                    | 17               | 0.2%            | 59  | -  | 0.0%                     | 17           | 100.0%                     |
| Point Leamington  | 591              | 27                                    | 470              | 6.0%            | 49  | 59                                       | 4.6%                     | 539          | 87.2%                      |
| Point of Bay  | 154              | 25                                    | 125              | 1.6%            | 47  | 18                                       | 1.2%                     | 143          | 87.4%                      |
| Other Communities   |                  |                                       | 464              | 6.0%            |   | n/a                                      |                          |              |                            |
|   |                  |                                       | 7,790            |                 |   | 1,497                                    |                          |              |                            |

\* Dept of Finance, 2016 Census Data

**Analysis:**

- The number of residents reported in the 2016 population census for the Botwood catchment area is 8,809, a decrease of 346 people from the 9,155 identified in the 2011 population census.
- The number of after hour (8 pm to 8 am) visits to CNRHC by residents of the Botwood catchment area during 2018 is 1,497, an average of four visits per evening. If the evening visits for residents of Bishop's Falls (786) is removed from the total annual visits (1,497), this reduces to 711 annual visits, or approximately two per evening.
  - Residents of Bishop's Falls are closer to CNRHC, and more likely to present at that facility rather than at the DHTHC.
- As can be seen in Table 1, more than 83 per cent of all ER presentations for the residents of the Botwood catchment area are made at DHTHC, with the exception of residents of Bishop's Falls who are closer to CNRHC.
- The data from 2018 supports the 2016 CH recommendation that ER service from 8 pm to 8 am is not required at the DHTHC as residents of the Botwood catchment area are accessing ER services from CNRHC as needed.

**Action Being Taken:**

- HCS will continue to monitor ER services at CNRHC by residents of the Botwood catchment area during the hours of 8 pm to 8 am to ensure service needs of residents are being met.

**Prepared/Approved by:**  
**Ministerial Approval:**

P. Barnes/A. Bridgeman/ H. Hanrahan/K. Stone  
 Received from Hon. John Haggie, MD

February 21, 2019

